

The **Rural Services Network** is the national champion for rural services, ensuring that people in rural areas have a strong voice. We are fighting for a fair deal for rural communities to maintain their social and economic viability for the benefit of the nation as a whole.



Equitable public sector funding remains a key goal of our work. Central Government has historically and systematically underfunded rural areas giving them less grant per head than urban areas – despite the fact that it costs more to provide the services. Rural residents earn less on average than those in urban areas and pay more Council Tax for fewer local government services. Government policy, implicitly, is that council services in rural areas are more reliant on funding through council tax than their urban counterparts. We demand fairer funding for all public services serving rural areas.

Urban areas in 21/22 still receive some 42% (£112) per head in Government Funded Spending Power more than their rural counterparts.

Public Health Grant Allocations to local authorities in 2021/22 are 56.8% greater per head in urban areas than rural.

Rural residents pay more, receive fewer services and, on average, earn less than those in urban areas and that is inequitable.

Hourly rates for personal social home care (external) are 3.2% greater in Predominantly Rural local authority areas when compared with the England average (using data from Adult Social Care Activity and Finance: England 2019-20).

Using figures from the final local government settlement, 2021 to 2022, rural residents pay 18.8% (£96) per head more in council tax than their urban counterparts due to receiving less government grant. Rural residents fund 69% of their Local Government Spending Power through Council Tax compared with urban residents who fund theirs by 57%

Adult social care as a percentage of local authority total service expenditure is higher in Predominantly Rural areas, standing at 26% in 2021/22 (21% for Predominantly Urban)

Taking the core spending power figures from the final local government finance settlement 2021 to 2022 for combined fire and rescue authorities and the metropolitan fire and rescue authorities (excluding the Greater London Authority), average per capita Government funding levels were:

Government Funded Spending Power (per head)

Predominantly Rural £12.84 (26% less than PU)

Predominantly Urban (PU) £17.27

Below is just a snapshot of the rural inequalities which creates vulnerability across England's rural communities:

	Rural	Urban
Amount paid on average by residents in Council Tax due to disparities in Government Grant received (2021/22)	£609	£512
Hourly rate for personal social care home (external) 2019/20	£18.04	£16.30
Public Health Allocations to local authorities in 2021/22	£43.53	£68.25
Average weekly transport costs, year ending March 2020	£114	£88
% of weekly disposable income spent on average weekly transport cost, year ending March 2020	14%	10%
Estimated percentage of households not connected to the gas network (2019)	25.1%	10.3%
Percentage with access to a Further Education site within 30mins travel time using public transport/walking (2017)	48.1%	92.3%
Percentage of employees, self employed people and trainees receiving on the job training in the previous 4 weeks (2019)	12.9%	13.5%
Percentage of working age population with NVQ level 4 or above (2019)	37.3%	47.8%
Projected (2018-based) percentage of population aged 85 and over in the year 2040	5.4%	3.3%
Average download speed (in Mbit/s) where broadband and speed information are available, 2020	54	81
Residual fuel usage (non gas, non electricity, non road transport fuels) (tonnes of oil equivalent) per resident (2018)	0.42ktoe	0.10ktoe
Average domestic electricity consumption, sales per consumer (kwh) (2018)	4167kwh	3510kwh
2018/19 hospital admissions as a result of self-harm directly standardised rate per 100,000 aged 10-24	511.8	407.8
2017/18 – 19/20 Admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions – crude rate per 100,000 under 18 yrs	39.1	28.6